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CITATION:

AOKI, Kay. A Social History and Concept Map Analysis on Sodade in Cabo Verdean Morna. *African Study Monographs* 2016, 37(4): 163-187

ISSUE DATE:

2016-12

URL:

<https://doi.org/10.14989/217654>

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## A SOCIAL HISTORY AND CONCEPT MAP ANALYSIS ON *SODADE* IN CABO VERDEAN MORNA

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**ABSTRACT** The *morna* is a musical genre at the core of the cultural identity of Cabo Verde that expresses a typical sentiment of the islanders: *sodade*. *Sodade* has developed in a socio-cultural context, where its actual significance seems to have evolved with the evolution of *morna*. The present research is a study of the lyrics of *morna* together with the daily life of Cabo Verdeans in order to examine how *sodade* in *morna* has become a representation of cultural identity. Emigration, emotions/feelings, objects or people yearned for, space/time, mind are the main elements of *sodade* that continues to mark a tradition in the cultural identity of the people of Cabo Verde

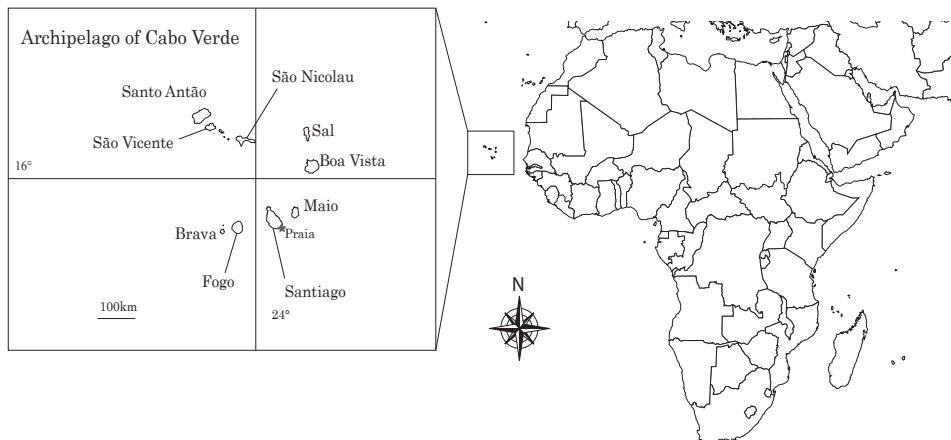
**Key Words:** Cultural identity; Transition; *Sodade*; Modern & Traditional *Morna*; Concept map.

### INTRODUCTION

The Cabo Verde islands (Fig. 1) were uninhabited until 1462 when they became a Portuguese colony. West African slaves were then brought to the islands taught Portuguese and Christianity and sold for high prices to the Latin American and European countries.

As slavery became established in the islands, in order to distinguish the whites born in the colony and blacks born in the New World from those born in Europe or Africa, the former were called Creole. Gradually, the Europeans and Africans of Cabo Verde intermixed, both in terms of race and in terms of language, and became the Cabo Verdean/Creole people. The meaning of Creole widened to include the culture and language as well as the people themselves. After the abolishment of slavery in the nineteenth century, the island of São Vicente became quite cosmopolitan through outside contact and influence, firstly from Latin America and then several decades later from Asia. The twentieth century was an era of turmoil in the history of Cabo Verde with massive emigration, especially to the United States and the island of São Tomé in São Tomé-and-Príncipe. Thus Cabo Verdean society grew quite complex in this historical context in terms of peoples, language and culture, and Creole came to indicate its particular identity.

Underpinning this cultural identity are three basic sentiments (Aoki, 2013), namely *sodade/sodád/sôdade* (hereinafter called *sodade*) (nostalgia and the deep sorrow emanating from it), *cretcheu* (love, longing, etc.) and *morabeza* (hospitality, kindness, pleasantness, etc.), with *sodade* at the very core. *Sodade* is an expression of the state of mind, typically a sense of nostalgia but encompasses a much wider and complex range of experiences, such as a deep lament or exhil-



**Fig. 1.** Map of Cabo Verde

aration for the past, triggered by a smell, a person, a place, etc. *Sodade* is derived from the Portuguese word, *saudade*, and generally is of identical significance. This could account for the relatively few studies on Cabo Verdean *sodade*. However, as the two countries developed independently with very different historical contexts, it could be surmised that there would be a difference in the perception of *saudade/sodade* as well.

*Saudade/sodade* is prominent in such music genres as the Portuguese *fado*, the Brazilian *samba*, *choro*, *modinha* and the Cabo Verdean *morna*. For this paper, the author focuses particularly on *sodade* in *morna*. *Morna* is, according to the linguist Armando Napoleão Fernandes, “a song and dance of quadruple time expressing a melancholy in which the people sob and sing their grief and sadness, a lament with a plaintive and painful tone” (cited in Gonçalves, 2006: 72). *Morna* is the national and traditional music of the islands of Cabo Verde, and it is ubiquitous. It can be heard at any time of the day and night, on the street and from houses, bars, and hotels, played by professional musicians or impromptu groups of friends. It is an integral part of life for the Cabo Verdean people and as such an integral part of their cultural identity. The poet Gabriel Mariano wrote, “[*morna* is] an expression of the soul of the people” (cited in Gonçalves, 2006: 72). The prominent *morna* composer Francisco Xavier da Cruz, more commonly known as B. Léza stated that, “there is only one place and one kind of people who understand *morna* and who understand its verses: Cabo Verde and Cabo Verdeans” (cited in Gonçalves, 2006: 72).

## OBJECTIVE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The purpose of this paper is to examine how the core sentiment of *sodade* in the national music of Cabo Verde, the *morna*, has become a representation of

cultural identity among the people of Cabo Verde.

The main questions are: to what did *sodade* refer in Cabo Verdean Creole and what is its actual significance today? How is *sodade* expressed through *morna*? And finally, what are the semantic components of *sodade*?

## METHODOLOGY

In preparation for the discussion on *sodade* and *morna*, the author applied two methods. The first is the socio-historical analysis of *morna* with reference to previous research as well as diachronic analysis of the lyrics proper from the end of the nineteenth century to the end of the twentieth century, as the lyrics in *morna* have maintained a certain stability as an art form in non-improvised songs.

The second method is participant observation data compiled by the author during field work in Cabo Verde, i.e., field notes, recordings of musical performances, interviews and associated concept maps. Field work was undertaken over a period of six months, from September 2013 to March 2014, of which four months were spent in the island of São Vicente, and one month each in the islands of Santo Antão and São Nicolau (Fig. 1).

## THE TRANSITION OF *SODADE* IN *MORNA*

In this section, the author will first examine how *sodade* became a sentiment among the people of Cabo Verde, and especially how this is reflected in the musical genre of *morna*, as it is ubiquitous in the lyrics. Then, the author will describe how *sodade* is actually felt and considered by the local people with regard to today's *morna*.

### I. Island of Boa Vista: The Outset

Eugénio Tavares (1867–1930), the great literary poet of Cabo Verde, wrote at the very beginning of his book *Mornas Cantigas Crioulas* (Creole Songs of Morna) that “*morna* is originally from the island of Boa Vista” (Tavares, 1932: 7). There is no historical evidence that disagrees with the fact so far. The historian António Germano Lima pointed out that the *proto-morna* dated back to the end of the eighteenth century to the island of Boa Vista, and the later, established form of *morna* of Brava and São Vicente came from Boa Vista (Lima, 2002: 207, 210). Thus, Lima presumed that it was a popularized form of the musical genre that existed on Boa Vista. There were two main aspects to this *morna*, one being a humouristic, social satire, and the other, and perhaps more pronouncedly, sentiments of nostalgia and *saudade* (Lima, 2002: 230).

The expression *sodade* of this period seemed to convey a sentiment of nostalgia, the sadness that comes from the absence of someone or something, as is the characteristic of *saudade* in the Portuguese of Portugal.<sup>(1)</sup> However, *sodade* seems to have more of a sentiment of grief of the slaves. Lima pointed out that the

*sodade* in *morna* (although he used the word, *saudade*) was associated with the slaves forced to live in an unknown distant island from their homeland, separated from their family. All of the sentiments of grief and hardship felt by the slaves were encompassed in *sodade*. Lima concluded that Boa Vista produced not only satirical styles, but a range of rich and varied styles of *morna*.

## II. Island of Brava: The *Morna* of the Literary Poet Eugénio Tavares

Gradually, as it spread to other islands, *morna* itself evolved, particularly in the island of Brava and then in São Vicente, in different ways. The historian António Aurélio Gonçalves defined the *morna* of the island of Brava as *morna-saudade* and that of the island of São Vicente as *morna-comment* and *morna-state of soul* (cited in Lima, 2002: 228).<sup>(2)</sup>

The author will first cite both Lima and Baltasar Lopes, a Cabo Verdean linguist. Lima posited that in the islands of Brava and São Vicente, *morna* evolved among the upper classes connected to the Portuguese religion but was not universally popular (Lima, 2002: 227). Lopes stated that it was only from the early 1930s that *morna* became significant as a type of folklore over the urban or urbanized music styles (cited in Gonçalves, 2006: 92). Gonçalves himself remarked that, “in the first half of the twentieth century, *morna* had not been fully popularized in the rural layers of the island of Santiago” (Gonçalves, 2006: 92). Although Gonçalves limited his observation to the island of Santiago, from the reference above by Lopes, the general influence is that in Brava and São Vicente, *morna* was enjoyed by the middle and upper classes until the 1930s.

The remarks above illustrate the two different ways *morna* developed. In Boa Vista *morna* was popularized while in Brava and São Vicente it evolved amongst the aristocrats and intellectuals.

Eugénio Tavares was the most prolific and most prominent composer of *morna* which made him a pioneer of this musical genre.<sup>(3)</sup> Tavares was one of the intellectuals, and previous research has found that the intellectuals of Cabo Verde contemporary to Tavares and their *morna* were greatly influenced by Portuguese romanticism (Gonçalves, 2006; Silva, 2005).

The probable first written record of the expression, *sodade*, is found in the lyrics for *morna* composed by Tavares from around the end of the nineteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century. His *morna* is renowned as *morna-saudade*. Without doubt, the influence of romanticism and the use of the typical Cabo Verdean expressions of *sodade* (i.e., *saudade*) and *cretcheu* (an expression of love), gave his *morna* songs a more emotional tone. But to what or to whom did this *sodade* refer if slavery no longer existed and therefore no more slaves existed to express their feelings of *sodade*? In order to attempt to answer this conundrum, the author will now turn to the lyrics of Eugénio Tavares.

### *Morna of Farewell*

Time to leave,  
Time of sorrow,

### *Morna de Despedida*

Hora di bai,  
Hora di dor,

I do not expect	Ja'n q'ré
The dawn arrives!	Pa el ca mancê!
[...]	[...]
My love,	Amor,
Leaves me cry!	Dixa'n chorâ!
Captive body,	Corpo catibo,
You, the slave have to go!	Bá bo que é escrabo!
[...]	[...]
Let me cry!	Dixa'n chorâ!
The destination of men:	Destino de home:
It is painful	Es dor
That has no name:	Que ca tem nome:
Pain of <i>cretcheu</i> ,	Dor de cretcheu,
Pain of <i>sodade</i> ,	Dor de sodade,
Of someone	De alguem
Of whom I want,	Que'n q're, que q'rem...
of whom I am wanted...	

(Translated from Creole to English by the author of this paper.)

Time is irreversible and in reality somebody has to leave the island for a distant land. The singer (the poet) expresses deep sorrow (=sodade) for that which is irreplaceable (=cretcheu), be it the birth-place (island of Brava in the case of Tavares), family, friends, lover, etc. In the lyrics, *cretcheu* and *sodade* are the two key sentiments. In the above *morna*, *cretcheu* can be the beloved anything or anyone, and *sodade* could be understood as a pang of pain arising from that sense of love. Thus, *cretcheu* and *sodade* are strongly intertwined. The themes of *sodade* and *cretcheu* are prominent in the *morna* of seaports (Tavares, 1932). Several studies (Martins, 1988; Monteiro, 1998; Rodrigues & Lobo, 1996) have pointed out, as is evident from the lyrics themselves, the *sodade* expressed in Tavares refers to a distant land, sorrow, lover, nostalgia, etc.

The socio-cultural history and more especially the great diaspora of the time, are the backdrop to the *sodade* represented in *morna*.

In fact, during the nineteenth century, there was such a massive emigration that there was an important community of Cabo Verdeans in the United States (Araújo & Abreu, 2011). The Cabo Verdeans who worked on the American whaling ships in the Atlantic Ocean elected to settle in the United States and escape the extreme drought and subsequent famine in Cabo Verde. This was especially true for the islanders of Brava, where many of the boat crews were from. The first phase of emigration to the United States was from 1900 to 1926 (Carreira, 1983). This period corresponds exactly to when Tavares was active as a poet and his typical style of *morna-saudade*.

The fact that Tavares had to leave for a distant land (in this instance the United States) inspired him to transform the expression of *sodade* into a romantic expression. Lima wrote that "there is no doubt, it is with the emigration of the people of Brava to the United States of America, in the last part of the nineteenth century, that the element of *saudade* (*sodade*) was dramatically introduced into *morna*" (Lima, 2002: 258).

The language Tavares used in his *morna* is of especial note as it harbingered the significance of *sodade* in the next generation of poets. The majority of the *morna* written by Tavares was in the Creole language and not in Portuguese, which is a strong indication to this author of his intent to bring about a change, or some sort of movement in Cabo Verde, as follows.

1) The introduction of the writing custom into Creole through *morna* coincidentally established *sodade* and other key sentiments as stable cultural components. The Creole language was an oral tradition until Tavares, as was the case in many African languages. According to Veiga (Veiga, 2000: 40), a Cabo Verdean linguist, the Creole language was written for the first time in the nineteenth century. The first essay written about the Creole language was in 1880 by the Portuguese philologist Francisco Adolfo Coelho, and the first grammatical essay was published by A. de Paula Brito in 1887. The introduction of the studies on the Creole language by scholars and Tavares writing the lyrics of *morna* in Creole language were in the same period. The author suspects that the studies by some Portuguese scholars lead Tavares to compose songs in his mother language of Cabo Verde. The poet's *Morna of Farewell* and his more famous *The Force of Cretcheu* are both written in the Creole language (Tavares, 1932: 27, 38):

### *The Force of Cretcheu*

There is nothing in this life  
Bigger than love.  
If God cannot be measured,  
Love is even greater...  
Love is even greater,  
Greater than the Ocean nor the sky:  
But, among other *cretcheu(s)*,  
Mine is even greater.

### *Força de Cretcheu*

Ca tem nada na es bida  
Más grande que amor.  
Se Deus ca tem medida,  
Amor inda é maior...  
Amor inda é maior,  
Maior que mar, que ceu:  
Mas, entre otos *cretcheu*,  
De meu inda é maior.

(Translated from Creole to English by the author of this paper.)

*Morna* as a new form of expression in Creole is extremely important in discussing the Cabo Verde national and cultural identity.

2) Establishing a stable identity of being Cabo Verdean, therefore made this identity visible. The author believes that this was historically the first action towards a movement creating the national identity for Cabo Verde.

The author posits that the above two points are closely associated with how *sodade* in Cabo Verde spread and became recognized.

### III. Island of São Vicente: The Final Destination of *Morna*

Lima (2002: 227) wrote that *morna* was born in Boa Vista and cultivated in Brava. It was the Boa Vista boatmen who brought to Brava the *morna* and its strong sentiment of *sodade*. Certainly, today's *morna* is known as the *morna-saudade* by the people of Cabo Verde. Even if the *morna-saudade* originated from the island of Brava (and introduced into *morna* by Tavares), nowadays the *morna-*



*saudade* is generally seen as the typical *morna* of Cabo Verde.

*Morna* on the island of São Vicente had two different sources of influence: the satirical *morna* of Boa Vista and the *morna-saudade* of Brava. Lima also wrote that “the *morna* of Boa Vista was concerned with nostalgia, *saudade*, an impish satire (comic-dramatic social caricature), a lyricism, a moral, and an earthy sensuality” (Lima, 2002: 230). Lopes stated that a great part of the *morna* of São Vicente was composed by the people of Boa Vista who had emigrated to São Vicente, particularly from 1845 (Lima, 2002: 261) which ceased in the mid-twentieth century.

A. A. Gonçalves stated that the *morna* of Eugénio Tavares was introduced to the island of São Vicente from 1918, and the poet was welcomed as a god by the people of Mindelo (cited in Gonçalves, 2006: 91–94).

The satirical *morna* came first from Boa Vista to São Vicente, then the romantic *morna* soon after arrived from Brava or was performed directly with Tavares. As São Vicente’s *morna* was the *morna-comment* and *morna-state of soul*, the former was derived from the satirical *morna* and the latter, from typical *sodade*. Thus, in this paper, the author will only discuss the second, the *morna-state of soul*. However, there does not seem to be a great difference between the *morna-saudade* and the *morna-state of soul*. There are two reasons for this: 1) As *sodade* was born of sentiments of diaspora, it is difficult to distinguish the precise difference in *sodade* between the islands of Brava and São Vicente. 2) The second reason relates to the first. The impact of the romantic *morna* (*morna-saudade*) from Brava to São Vicente was mainly from the boatmen who naturally and randomly spread the genre simply by performing the genre themselves, but also and perhaps to a greater extent than imaginable, by Tavares himself with his huge body of works. If Tavares and his poetry were admired by the islanders of São Vicente as much, it is difficult to distinguish the *sodade* sentiments of Brava and São Vicente.

Therefore, the author will limit the discussion to the components of *morna-saudade*, or better expressed for this paper *morna-sodade*.

Another prominent poet-composer who followed the period of Eugénio Tavares was Francisco Xavier da Cruz, a.k.a. B. Léza (1905–1958). No discussion of *morna* can take place without the two men assuredly. Massive emigration and their resultant inspiration to *sodade* was still present after the time of Tavares (Gonçalves, 2006; Lima, 2002; Martins, 1988). For example, in *Terra Longe* (*Distant Land*) by B. Léza, the common theme can be observed:

### ***Distant Land***

[...]  
I saw the huge land  
I know a better land  
But one day it will give me  
the *sodade*  
Of my land São Vicente  
[...]

### ***Terra Longe***

[...]  
Dja m’oia terra grande  
Dja m’conxê terra mas sabe  
Ma um dia da-m *sodade*  
Di nha terra São Vicente  
[...]

(Translated from Creole to English by the author of this paper.)



Nostalgia is expressed above, and B. Léza, like other Cabo Verdeans, had also experienced living abroad, in Portugal, the United States of America, and also other islands of Cabo Verde. Another work by B. Léza's was created during his stay in Portugal where, hospitalized, he wrote the *morna* entitled *Bejo di Sodade* (*Kiss of Sodade*):

***Kiss of Sodade***

Sacred waves of the Tejo  
Let me kiss your water  
Let me give you a kiss  
A kiss of pain  
A kiss of *sodade*  
That you bring to the ocean  
And the ocean brings to my island

***Bejo di Sodade***

Ondas sagrada di Tejo  
Dixá'm bejá bô água  
Dixá', dabo um bejo  
Um bejo di mágoa  
Um bejo di *sodade*  
Pa bô levá mar  
Pa mar levá nha terra

(Translated from Creole to English by the author of this paper.)

Both *Terra Longe* and *Bejo di Sodade* are songs of nostalgic sentiment. In the latter, *sodade* is expressed as pain because of the distance from home. It is interesting that the body of water, especially the ocean (or in above case the river), is certainly interwoven into this particular expression of *sodade*.

The musician Vasco Martins pointed out that "if Eugénio Tavares was essentially a poet of love, it is from B. Léza that the *morna* of nationalist motivation began to be generalized" (Martins, 1988: 93). Indeed, the nineteen-thirties was an important period in the history of *morna* as this was when the genre became truly popularized in Cabo Verde. The work of B. Léza continued on the themes by Tavares as *morna-sodade*, but also introduced humour and social criticism. Here, as an example, is a satirical *morna*, *Hitler*, composed by B. Léza, composed in Creole. An English version was sent to the Press of the British Ambassador in Lisbon (Nogueira, 2005).

***Hitler***

Hitler will not win the war,  
or anything  
War is for our allies  
The black eagles lost the war  
right away  
We believe in British  
We have confidence in all of  
its values  
*Fuhrer* is lost  
With all of his honor  
Churchill is a piece of steel  
That doesn't melt

***Hitler***

Hitler ca ta ganhá guerra n' é nada  
Guerra é di nós aliado  
Águia negra vencida na campo di batalha  
Nô tâ pô fé na British  
Nô tâ confia na tude sê valor  
Der Fuhrer já stâ pirdide  
Co tude sê horror  
Churchill é um barra di aço  
Qui câ tâ derretê

On land, at sea and in the air      Na terra, na mar e no ar  
He must win...      El tem qui vencê...

(Translated from Creole to English by the author of this paper.)

Nogueira (2005: 49) stated that the influence in Cabo Verde of B. Léza's *Hitler* demonstrated not only an international but also a national inspiration, as everybody in Cabo Verde, children and adults, sang it with a prophetic faith.

To summarize briefly, *morna* originated in Boa Vista as a popular musical art form, and subsequently embraced in Brava by the bourgeoisie and the upper-classes. In spreading to the island of São Vicente, it gradually became the popular musical genre known today. It is said that “[the venue has changed] from the salon to the backyard.”

#### IV. Post-Independence and Tourism

According to Monteiro (1998: 104), famine struck the islands twice in the 1940s, in 1940–1943 and again in 1946–1947. For 300 years Cabo Verde regularly suffered from drought and famine, and other harsh environmental conditions,<sup>(4)</sup> prompting the people to continue to emigrate to other ex-Portuguese colonies, particularly São Tomé-and-Príncipe and Angola. The most famous *morna*, *Sodade*, thanks to the diva Cesária Évora (1941–2011), virtually became the national anthem of Cabo Verde.

##### *Sodade*

Who showed you the distant path?  
This path to São Tomé  
*Sodade, sodade, sodade*  
Of the island of São Nicolau  
If you write me  
I will write you  
If you forget me  
I will forget you  
Until the day  
Of your return

##### *Sodade*

Quem mostra' bo ess caminho longe?  
Ess caminho pa São Tomé  
*Sodade, sodade, sodade*  
Dess nha terra São Nicolau  
Si bo 'screve' me  
'M ta 'screve be  
Si bo 'squece me  
'M ta 'squece be  
Até dia  
Qui bo voltà

(Translated from Creole to English by the author of this paper.)

Cesária Évora made her singing debut in Paris with the above *Sodade* at the end of the twentieth century, whose name and the country of Cabo Verde were put on the cultural map of the world. The author would argue that she started a social phenomenon, namely the internationalization of Cabo Verde through *morna*. As a result of this phenomenon and national development in Cabo Verde, tourism has grown to such an extent that it is today the major economic resource for the islands.

The above song was composed in the 1950s by an islander originally from São Nicolau who came to São Tomé. The song is certainly full of sorrow and romance reminiscent of Tavares for his original island, his family and friends.

However, another characteristic of *sodade* is the positive way of thinking, that if you must leave the island and the warm-hearted people, then there is hope of coming back again.

Another event of major importance is the independence of Cabo Verde in 1975. During the period leading up to independence, an alternate musical genre called *coladeira* seems to have been more appreciated. *Coladeira* was another popularized music genre of Cabo Verde, already in existence in the 1950s. Some say that the *coladeira* evolved from the *morna*. *Coladeira* is dance music that has a quicker rhythm (double time) than the *morna*. In its lyrics, the *coladeira* is characterized by satirical and ironical comments on daily life or society, and may have been more suited to a revolutionary movement. Gonçalves explained that “the *coladeira* seized the satirical aspect and the social criticism” (Gonçalves, 2006: 112), and that the “innovative style [the *coladeira*] of Manuel de Novas [a *morna/coladeira* composer] shows up in the post-independence” (Gonçalves, 2006: 106).

However, the post-independence social situation became very different in everyday life with the arrival of radios, LPs and CDs, televisions, and many other modern appliances. Even airplanes made life easier. In music, electric instruments became available just as everywhere else in the world. Furthermore, due to restrictive emigration policies and a decrease in the overseas demand for work, emigration in fact decreased after independence (Hoffman, 2007). Cabo Verde started to see quite a change in the population flow as well, with the great influx of tourists who had discovered the islands. Today, tourism is a major source of income for Cabo Verde and it goes without saying that this has had an impact on *morna*.

But although the people of Cabo Verde may have gained an easier and more convenient life style, the sentiment of *sodade* is still present.

## THE CURRENT *MORNA*: FROM THE TRADITIONAL TO THE MODERN

A key point of this study is to gain an understanding of how the local people consider the transition of *sodade* through *morna* and why their perception of *morna* is changing. If the perception of *morna* has evolved, is it possible that the significance of *sodade* has also changed?

In order to address these questions, the author will examine the present day situation of *morna* and how it is perceived by the people.

The set of interviews in this section reflects the common points of view held by musicians from a wide age range, and amply illustrate the actuality of *morna* and the way it is perceived:

Interview 1 (17th October 2013)

Occupation: instrumentalist (B); Sex: male; Age: 50 years old

Author)

Could you tell me if the form of *morna* has changed since you were young?

B)

People's lives have greatly changed at the same time as society has changed. Because I think, at least, in previous times the *morna* I heard compared to the *morna* I hear today by the youngsters had a different form. Of course, people of my age will feel in the same way. It depends on your life style. There weren't any modern technologies such as computers or televisions. It was another era. So, people cultivated music in their free time. (...) People who were singing or playing guitars were those who were participating in serenade. That was an old tradition. Today, it is impossible to see a group of musicians who plays serenade. In the past, the music [*morna*] people made was slow and soft, and the people put life into the sounds. The music was incredible, but today no one tries to do this.

Author)

Why?

B)

Because at that time, we had *cretcheu* but we no longer use that romantic expression [in daily life].

Among the changes, it is interesting to note the absence of *cretcheu* today which was a cultural staple for a very long time in *morna*. *Cretcheu* had been made popular by Tavares around the early twentieth century, and always associated with *morna-sodade*. Nowadays, the young people find *cretcheu* old-fashioned. The phrase, "romantic expression" in the above interview even seems ironic. However, from another perspective, *cretcheu*, different from *amor* (love), is still ubiquitous in *morna*, and therefore has its particularity in *morna*. Even though to mention *cretcheu* is considered or felt old-fashioned by local young people, the author sensed a contradiction when the characteristics of the modern *morna* was observed which is quite important to this discussion. On the surface, *cretcheu* may seem nearly extinct in daily life. The brackets in the interview [in daily life], in the above interview was provided because *cretcheu* is prominent in the lyrics of *morna*. The modern *morna* may be new fashioned, and there may have been an evolution from the traditional to the modern *morna*. However, as seen in Interview 3, it may simply be that the musical elements (instruments, harmony, chords, etc.) have modified and the lyrics, and the power behind the words, have not changed.

Interview 2 (17th October 2013)

Identical person to interview 1

Author)

Were there any specific dates to play a serenade?

B)

No. Everything we [Cabo Verdeans] do is for our pleasure. It is a pleasure for the person who plays the instruments and a pleasure for the audiences. (...) Indeed, *morna* has lost its essence. Of course there still are many young ones

who are interested, but there are also many who aren't. Those who are interested are the young ones who listened to *morna* at home ever since they were little.

Author)

What do you think is the value of *morna*?

B)

It is difficult to explain. When I listen to *morna*, it is like remembering everything in the past: the conviviality with the older people; conviviality was passed on. *Morna* has an incredible meaning for me. It is my life. Because it reflects the conviviality, the form of living, the time I lived. (...) People listened to the people who played the musical instruments. I, at least, remember when I was five or six years old that I was always in a district nearby my house to listen and to practice with the performers; For many young people, the old *morna* like those of B. Léza are of no interest [as they are old-fashioned]. It is true though that there are some who do perform the old *morna*, but for the most part the new generation shows little interest.

On the surface, local musicians comment that *morna* has lost its essence. According to these musicians, the tradition of *morna* has changed radically. The younger people do not adhere to the tradition to learn *morna* naturally by listening and playing together with neighbors or older people. As the island of São Vicente has greatly developed economically thanks to tourism and Cesária Évora, the musicians' argument that the tradition and the essence of *morna* has been lost, is understandable. Indeed, the tradition of *morna* has perhaps lost its essence and has modernized in a certain way by the introduction of new sounds and different musical instruments, which is the understanding by the musician interviewed below whose *morna* style has evolved to become similar to a *bossa nova* or jazz.

However, during field work in the north-west islands, the author observed that there were still young people playing with their elders. Oral tradition<sup>(5)</sup> still was seen,<sup>(6)</sup> and a neighbor in São Vicente told me he could not read music. Even a renowned pianist of Cabo Verde mentioned in his interview that he could not read music but listened to the notes and then played music. Many islanders can play a musical instrument, and those who do not, dance or sing with fervour. From participant observation, the author understood that, basically, the people of Cabo Verde not merely loved music but sought to express their feelings of present and past everyday life in music; music was an expression that came from within as improvisation, dear to the people of Cabo Verde.

Interview 3 (17th December 2013)

Occupation: vocalist (K); Sex: male; Age: fifties

Author)

If there are few *morna* composers today, do you think it is difficult for *morna* to continue to evolve?

K)

I don't think so. There is always someone who writes *morna* as young com-

posers who are not known yet. So, [it is possible to consider] *morna* is in the step of evolution.

Author)

Could you tell me some names of musicians or composer as an example?

K)

Vlu, Constantino Cardoso... Well, I don't know. Actually, it is the fact that the essence of *morna* has been lost a little.

Author)

The *morna* has lost its essence a little. Do you think so because the musical form is changing?

K)

Indeed. In the past, the composers had more themes to write the songs of *morna*. But today, things have changed and today's composers cannot write *morna* as in the old days: those sentiments of *sodade* and love.

Author)

Why do you think it is difficult to express those sentiments of *sodade* and love?

K)

This happened because before there was a great deal of emigration, so we had more of a feeling of *sodade*. So, there aren't much of themes to write *morna* as before.

Author)

Then what kind of *morna* do you sing if there are few themes?

K)

I sing *morna* but it is modern *morna*. It has, for example, an influence from jazz or *bossa nova*. I believe *morna* has become richer in that way. Of course the lyrics I sing are from traditional *morna*. When I talk of modern *morna*, I only mean the music, only the chords for instance, are different or more modern.

The above vocalist creates his own style of modern *morna* by introducing elements of *bossa nova* and jazz. Possibly, because many composers cannot write *morna*, the musicians, including the vocalists, have started to introduce new musical elements instead of modifying the lyrical form as happened in the past.

The vocalist only gave the author a short list of the lyrical features in modern *morna*: "*coladeira* is a sentiment of criticism and joy while *morna* has other sentiments like *sodade*, sadness, love." Therefore, for some people in Cabo Verde, the lyrics of *morna* have more of a sad sentiment. However, today's trend in *morna* and the fact that there has been a mix of musical elements in modern *morna*, shows less emphasis on sadness compared to the old *morna* that reflected the harshness of slavery and the environmental disasters. That is to say, musicians made less of the sadness in the old *morna* by changing the sounds to suit the post-slavery and independence eras, and again from post-independence to tour-

ism age.

There are musicians who seem disappointed that *morna* has essentially changed. There are also those, in contrast, not necessarily young but who prefer to perform in a more modern style than the old *morna*. As discussed above, perhaps it is strongly a result of tourism.

Yet, curiously, in modern *morna*, the lyrics used are not too different from those in by Tavares and, more importantly, those composed during the period of B. Léza in the mid-twentieth century. Thus, as the interviewees attest, *morna* has changed but not the lyrics. The people are re-expressing the earlier *morna* in both the traditional and a modern ways.

Another point to note is that whether it is traditional *morna* or modern *morna*, the lyrics and the singing have not changed. The typical musical expression comes from long stretches of improvised vocalizations, called melisma. This improvisational talent is what the people of Cabo Verde value the most. The author would emphasize here that the essence of *morna* is to execute this melisma beautifully even today. Therefore, the essence of *morna* has not been lost but the musical style has simply evolved in the context of tourism and a need to keep abreast the world culture. The particular melisma is the tradition that is still appreciated in *morna*, because it is integral to the complex expression of *sodade*. In fact, interviewee M, a vocalist singing the modern *morna* performed melisma that lasted for one minute and seventy seven seconds in a song of six minutes and twenty five seconds. Melisma was known in the performance of traditional *morna*.

However, it is not certain if the improvised vocalization was prominent in the periods of Tavares and B. Léza from the nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century due to lack of historical documents. The author has a hypothesis that the melisma may be a tradition handed down from the slaves of Boa Vista who first expressed *sodade*, having observed the typical melisma in Cabo Verde.

#### I. Current Perception of *Sodade* in the North-West Islands

The question to be posed now is how relevant *sodade* is to the life of Cabo Verdean people. Below are some musicians' thoughts on *sodade*:

Interview 4 (29th September 2013)

Occupation: vocalist in an amateur band (F); Sex: female; Age: fifties

Author)

Do you feel that the sentiments of *morna* have changed?

F)

The sentiments of *morna* are always the same, they do not change. Precisely, the sentiment of *morna* is a lament like my song: *morna* comes from pain and joy. It is a mixture of the sad moments and the good moments. When the two moments meet, the two sentiments become extremely strong. Those two sentiments are precisely the sentiment of *sodade*. (...) Before the 60s and 70s, when Cabo Verdeans were fighting with Portugal and when there was massive emigration, we were expressing love, longing and *sodade*. Indeed, the ocean does sep-



arate us but it also brings us together.

The above conversation that *morna* was a lament, it came from pain and joy, and that the two combined was the sentiment of *sodade*, etc., showed many very common elements on the topic when the islanders referred to *morna*. Based on this, here the author introduces the concept map (see below) to further illustrate the understanding of *sodade*.

The comparison of *sodade* among the people in the North-West islands of São Vicente, Santo Antão and São Nicolau will not be applied here, as the connection between the three islands is extremely tight. São Vicente is not only the cultural island of Cabo Verde but also the central city of the five islands situated in Barlavento. Hence, many people from Santo Antão or São Nicolau have lived for a long time in São Vicente.

## II. Analysis of *Sodade* in Daily Life

The concept map is an analytical tool promoted by Novak & Cañas (2008), with the inclusion of *cross-links* as one of its main features. They explained that *cross-links* showed “relationships or links between concepts in different segments or domains of the concept map” (Novak & Cañas, 2008: 2). The strength of concept maps is that it helps visualize “specific examples or objects that help to clarify the meaning of a given concept” (Novak & Cañas, 2008: 2).

The objective of using the concept map in this research is to visualize the informal interviews as well as the lyrics of *morna*. In conducting the interviews, first the interviewee was given a sheet of paper with a chosen key expression written in a circle in the middle. Second, the interviewee was asked to spontaneously set down and, link the word(s), phrase(s), drawing(s), etc. that s/he associated with the key expression in Cabo Verdean Creole. Finally, on completion of the concept map the interviewee was closely questioned to elucidate the reasons and motivations behind such associated ideas and feelings.

### Case study 1 (7th November 2013)

Interviewee L; Occupation: primary school teacher of Portuguese; Sex: female; Age: 32 years old

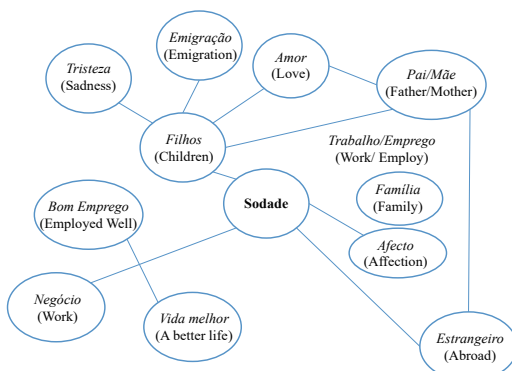


Fig. 2. Concept Map by Interviewee L

“Kem T’bai leva sodade, kem t’fká tem sodade” (who leaves (the island) takes the *sodade*, who stays, keeps the *sodade*). This is what interviewee L told me. The words, Work/Employ, are over Family and the line that connects Abroad with Father/Mother. On the other side of the map *sodade* is directly connected with Work. From these relations, interviewee L said that getting to work was important as it meant the ability to support the family. The patriarchal family structure is still very strong in Cabo Verde. In many societies, to earn a salary is synonymous with livelihood. But for this woman, even though she is a teacher of Portuguese, working meant specifically to work abroad which, consequently, brought her *sodade*.

### Case study 2 (7th November 2013)

Interviewee D; Occupation: primary school teacher of music; Sex: male; Age: 31 years old

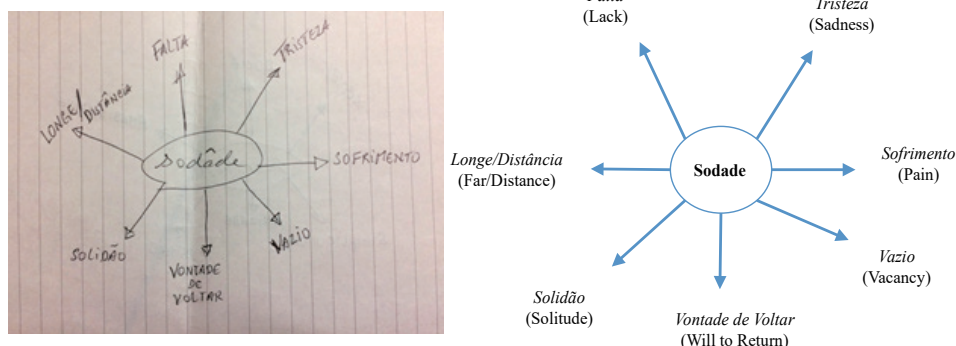


Fig. 3. Concept Map by Interviewee D

Interviewee D stated that for him, the word, Lack, is a feeling of necessity to love a person. The word, Vacancy, meant the absence of spirit and power. With the other words, Pain, Solitude and Sadness, *sodade* had more of a pessimistic feeling instead of happiness for interviewee D. He is a teacher of music at a primary school and also my informant during field work. Closely following the daily life of interviewee D for one month, and communicating with his friends and colleagues, the author was surprised with what felt like a gap in D’s demeanour and mentality, because he did not look as though he had such sadness in daily life. What the author supposes is that because D’s sense of *sodade* was so pessimistic, he suppressed his thoughts about it. Avoiding sadness or pessimism also reminded the author of the vocalist in interview 3. For his diversion he creates modern *morna*. In the case of interviewee D, he took pleasure in playing music and participating in local music festivals, despite the melancholic and pessimistic

sensations of *sodade* in *morna*.

Indeed, *morna* expresses lament or a memory from the past. In the end, D commented that, “the reason why we put value on our music is because when we go abroad (perhaps emigrate), we feel *sodade* for Cabo Verdean music. And that is the way people come to value *morna*. *Morna*, emigration and *sodade* are closely related. It doesn’t mean that everyone likes *morna*. That depends on the person. But those sentiments are real.”

Case study 3 (9th November 2013)

Interviewee O; Occupation: municipal office worker; Sex: male; Age: 27 years old

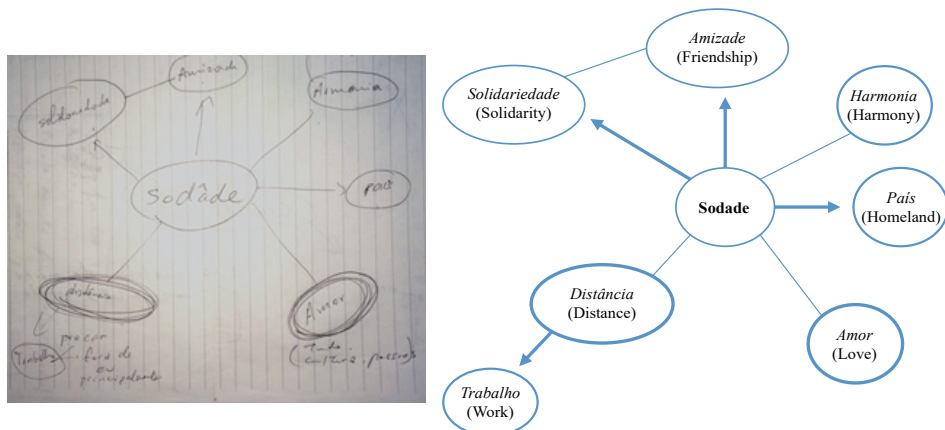


Fig. 4. Concept Map by Interviewee O

Interviewee O especially emphasized the words, Distance and Love in relation to *sodade*. The word, Love, for him was all sorts of love including culture, people or patriotism. The word, Distance, signified foreign countries and Cabo Verde. Work was related to Distance. As above, Work is to have a better life and is related more to friends who have emigrated. Solidarity is quite ambiguous as an expression. According to interviewee O, Solidarity is to become friends without difficulty, which is an idea of *morabeza*. *Morabeza* is another typical expression in Cabo Verdean, to show spontaneous hospitality or kindness with pleasure. It is strongly related to the Cabo Verdean culture, or more precisely to *morna* (Aoki, 2013).

Case study 4 (8th November 2013)

Interviewee R; Occupation: upper secondary school teacher of engineering; Sex: male; Age: 49 years old

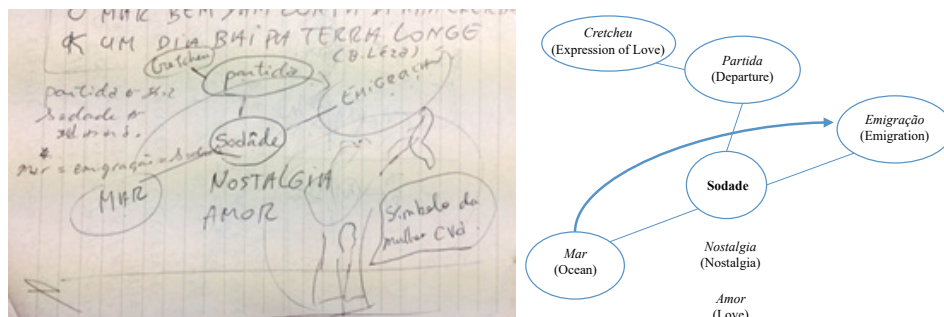


Fig. 5. Concept Map by Interviewee R

“*Sodade*, Ocean, Departure are closely connected because the Ocean is where people depart. Previously, there were no airplanes but only ships. So the Ocean is where my friends left and simultaneously where *sodade* was born.” This was how interviewee R explained *sodade*. He gave the author as an example the statue of a Cabo Verdean woman in Porto Novo on Santo Antão. He explained that the statue was the symbol of *sodade*. The woman of the statue is *Me Maia*, or Mother Maia. Her husband left her and their son on the island of Santo Antão, and *Me Maia* waves her handkerchief and the son has a sad face (Fig. 6). Thus, a person is leaving, and the sentiment of *sodade* arises. The person who is left and stays will have a particular emotion underlying the word, Ocean.

Interviewee R recited a verse of a *morna* by B. Léza: “O mar bem dam conta di nha cretcheu k’um dia bai pa terra longe,” which was, “the Ocean comes to tell you about the *cretcheu* who one day will leave to a distant land.” This verse is precisely what the statue of *Me Maia* portrays. Interviewee R also commented on the word, Emigration, mentioning that it is the same as leaving for a distant land. The statue of *Me Maia* and the feelings of emigration or departure related to *morna* indicate that people not only create or feel a sense of *sodade* from their own experiences but also gain it from listening to *morna*.



Fig. 6. Statue of *Me Maia* (Mother Maia)

## Case study 5 (8th November 2013)

Interviewee S; Occupation: lawyer; Sex: male; Age: 46 years old

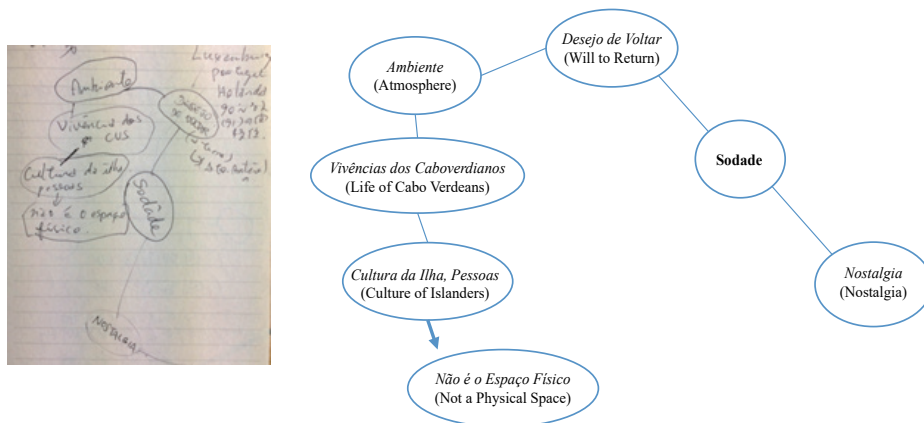


Fig. 7. Concept Map by Interviewee S

Interviewee S linked the word, *sodade* to the words, Nostalgia and the Will to Return. He added certain words to explain more: the culture, the life in the islands, the atmosphere. He also clearly indicated that *sodade* is not a space but a sentiment, although he had also related it to culture. This interviewee had lived in Luxembourg, Portugal, and Holland for twelve years, from 1990 to 2002. According to him, this was the reason why he had placed Nostalgia apart from the other words, as it seemed to him to mean something special.

## Case study 6 (9th November 2013)

Interviewee C; Occupation: upper secondary school teacher of Portuguese; Sex: male; Age: 60 years old

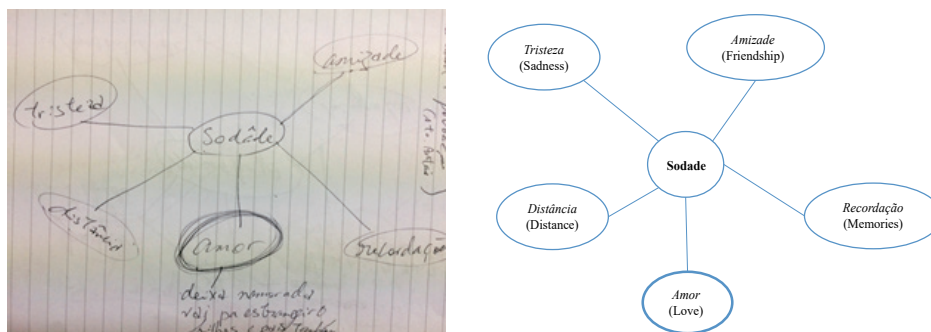


Fig. 8. Concept Map by Interviewee C

Love is the word interviewee C emphasized in relation to *sodade*. In the interview, he told me the reason why the word, Love, was important: “I left my lover, children and my own country.” The words, Distance, made him remember the feelings of such Memories he had with his family and friends, and Love. This brought him sadness.

Interviewee C’s *sodade* reminded the author of the *sodade* expressed by Tavares: a *sodade* related to *cretcheu* (or love = *amor* in contemporary Cabo Verdean Creole) and distance.

#### Case study 7 (18th December 2013)

Interviewee H; Occupation: composer and instrumentalist; Sex: male; Age: 32 years old

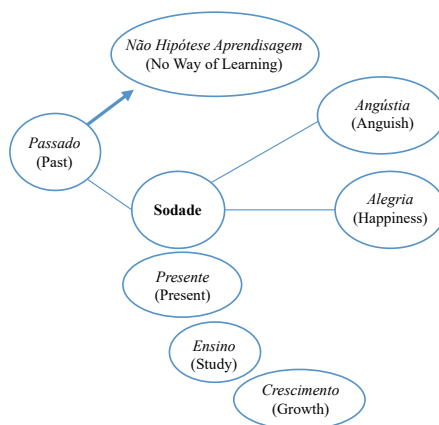


Fig. 9. Concept Map by Interviewee H

“I don’t like *sodade*. It certainly makes me feel anguish. I have no interest in anguish.” This was what interviewee H told the author. For him, *sodade* did not exist. (or did he try not to remember?). He had a negative view of *sodade*, because he connected it with the past. He explained that “we will not learn from the past. We can only learn from the present. So I don’t like to listen to old music as it makes me remember the past.” Interviewee H preferred spontaneously learning from the present through constantly feeling, creating, and experiencing new things. He explained how *sodade* could be linked to the words, Happiness and Anguish: “*sodade* makes me remember the past with happiness. It is so good. But the fact of remembering the past itself brings me anguish.” Hence, *sodade* made him go backwards, and did not help him advance. The author had an impression that interviewee H had a similar view to the vocalist K in interview 3 and interviewee L above, which implies one of the reasons why modern *morna* was needed by the people.



Case study 8 (6th January 2014)

Interviewee M; Occupation: vocalist; Sex: female; Age: 28 years old

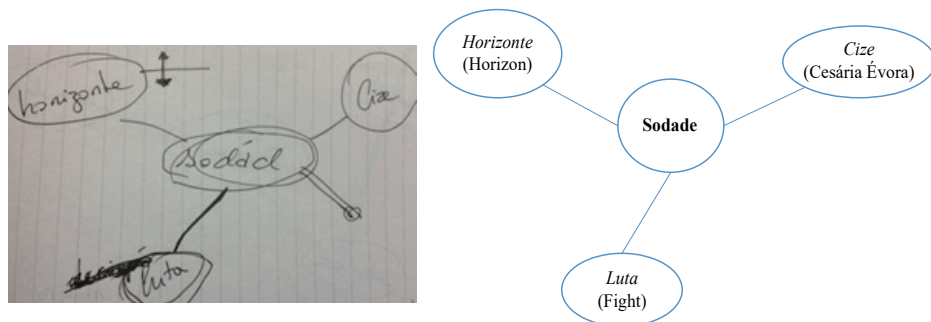


Fig. 10. Concept Map by Interviewee M

“Horizon is what I see when looking towards the ocean. The Ocean is a place of leaving and meeting. This, including *sodade*, is illustrated in all the literature, music and society of Cabo Verde. Certainly, it is because emigration started with the ocean in this country. My grandfather had a ship to take many people to the United States. When the ship set sail, and after a while, what we saw was the horizon.” This story is similar to that of interviewee L who said, he “who leaves (the island) takes the *sodade*, who stays, keeps the *sodade*.”

According to interviewee M, the word, Fight, is to fight for life. It is an option or decision and also what motivates people to travel. People in Cabo Verde have to leave the islands to fight for their lives. Hence, what she feels from *sodade* is this Fight to live.

Cize, is the nickname for the famous Cabo Verdean singer, Cesária Évora. The grand diva is representative of Cabo Verde, she made the country famous and spread Cabo Verdean music to the rest of the world, especially the *morna*, by singing the song, *Sodade*. Interviewee M referred not only to Cesária but to the people of Cabo Verde in general, saying, “even though Cabo Verdeans do not sing well, they have a great facility to transmit their feelings in singing.” What she referred to was the melisma. Cize also proclaimed her identity by standing barefoot on the stage. This illustrated the situation or conditions of life, and especially the way Cize lived in Cabo Verde. In displaying her talent and this physical appearance, Cesária Évora demonstrated that she, or any Cabo Verdean, could transmit *sodade*.



Case study 9 (9th January 2014)

Interviewee J; Occupation: vocalist; Sex: female; Age: 29 years old

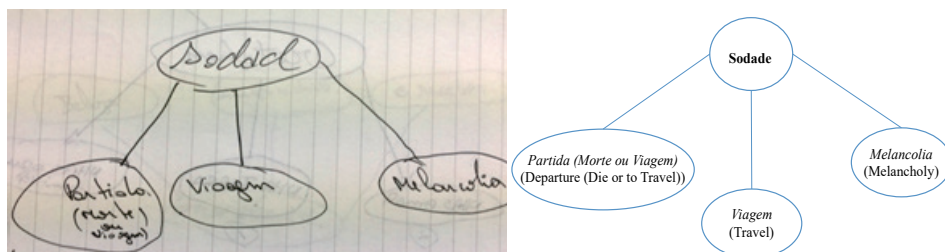


Fig. 11. Concept Map by Interviewee J

The meaning of the word, Departure, is identical to that explained by other interviewees. Interviewee J felt *sodade* for her family, especially her grandmother and aunt who raised her. That is because her mother emigrated to Luxembourg twenty eight years ago. Interviewee J also had lived off Cabo Verde, for about four years in Lisbon, which made her feel *sodade* towards her child. However, her point of view of *sodade* was not only limited to departure or emigration. She explained that especially when people travel, even within Cabo Verde to the other islands, it was *sodade*. In her case, her tears would flow whenever she went to the neighboring island of Santo Antão. She explained, “I feel *sodade* of the roads, *sodade* of Creole (the language and the islanders) or *sodade* of the way people in São Vicente live.”

Interviewee J had distinct perspective of *sodade* from interviewee H. To J, *sodade* had both positive and negative aspects. Yet in whichever aspect, *sodade* was in the present and not in the past. “*Sodade* is a tradition, so until you understand its sentiment you have only the sadness that remains inside. When you are still very young, you cannot understand why your family needs to be far away from you. But on the other hand, we maintain our relationship (between the interviewee and her family) by writing letters or talking on the phone.” Melancholy was not negative for her as it brought to her the memories with her friends. Hence, when she felt Melancholic, she wrote songs as she is inspired by *sodade*.

### III. Summary of Results

With the concept map, it was possible to visualize the complexity of *sodade*. The maps deciphered the following five elements:

1. Emigration  
Departure, Travel, Distance, Ocean, Horizon
2. Emotions/Feelings  
Sadness, Anguish, Pain, Happiness, Loneliness, Love, Melancholy, Nostalgia, Will of Return

3. Objects or people yearned for  
Fighting against Life, No Spirit nor Strength, Country, Friends, Work, Cize (Cesária Évora)
4. Space/Time  
Present, Past, Ocean, Memories, Emptiness
5. Mind  
Memories, Environment, Harmony

## CONCLUSION

This paper sought to analyze the significance of the sentiment, *sodade*, in *morna*, the national music of Cabo Verde, which has become a representation of cultural identity.

The discussion started from the island of Boa Vista, as it is held to be the origin of *morna*, then moved on to the islands of Brava and São Vicente. In Boa Vista, the *sodade* expressed in *morna* was a lament and grief or sorrow of the slaves who were brought from West Africa. The *morna* of the eighteenth century was popularized. Another typical *morna* of this island expressed a humouristic criticism, a sort of satire against society.

The *morna* which spread to the island of Brava in the eighteenth century became salon music played among the bourgeoisie and upper classes. The literary poet Tavares, influenced by Portuguese romanticism, introduced the melancholic and emotional *sodade* to *morna* using Creole notations such as *cretcheu* (an expression of love). Underlying the *sodade* was the history of mass emigration. The physical distance between the *cretcheu* (lover, friend, a relative, etc.) brought about *sodade*. This emotional and romantic *morna*, the *morna-sodade*, is still what the people in Cabo Verde perceive as *morna* today, which they call traditional *morna*. Against the oral tradition of Creole language in the islands, Tavares wrote his *morna* in Cabo Verdean Creole. His writing in Creole could be seen as an international move to construct a national identity through *morna* with *sodade* at its core.

The *morna* by Tavares was embraced by the Cabo Verdeans, particularly in the island of São Vicente where *morna* was cherished and developed. *Morna* again became a popular music genre, approximately from the 1930s, beyond the original region of Boa Vista and widespread among the islands. The *morna* of São Vicente was not only influenced by the *morna-sodade* but also by the satirical *morna* of Boa Vista brought by the boatmen to São Vicente. The great poet B. Léza of São Vicente enhanced the popularization of *morna*.

Electric appliances, as everywhere else in the world, became the fashion in Cabo Verde just before independence. CDs, LPs, televisions and radios, airplanes were gradually introduced into the lifestyle of Cabo Verdeans. After the rebirth as a republic, Cabo Verde developed as a nation. Life became easier at the end of the twentieth century, the time when the singer Cesária Évora became famous, spreading Cabo Verdean culture to the world by singing *morna*. Thanks to the diva, tourism then became an important economic resource.

In the second part of the study, *sodade* and its current personal significance to the islanders were principally examined.

The author found that *sodade* was still present in lyrics of both the traditional and the modern *morna* for two reasons: first, the majority of lyrics used in today's *morna* are still those first compiled during the periods of Tavares and later by, B. Léza. Because *morna* is a historical musical genre and tradition of Cabo Verde, even if contemporary people are not keen to the pessimistic sentiments of *sodade*, they have inherited them as a traditional culture. Second, the people still appreciate *sodade* through an improvised vocalization of melisma in singing *morna*. This is what the people of Cabo Verde cherish most when singing. The whole range of sentiment in *sodade* is expressed in this melisma. The author hypothesizes that the singing may have derived from the lament of the slaves. If so, from this aspect, modern *morna* is a re-expression of traditional *morna*.

Finally, the complex associations of *sodade* was visualized in order to capture how the people of Cabo Verde perceive the concept using the concept maps. Five elements were deciphered: 1. Emigration; 2. Emotions/Feelings; 3. Objects or people yearned for; 4. Space/Time; 5. Mind. These elements are essentially expressed in *morna* and illustrate that *sodade* continues to be a tradition of the people of Cabo Verde in daily life to express their cultural identity.

Consequently, the *sodade* expressed through *morna* and the *sodade* perceived in the daily lives of the people of Cabo Verde are certainly inseparable.

## NOTES

- (1) The Portuguese as spoken in Portugal and Brazil is distinguished as European Portuguese or Portuguese of Portugal, and Brazilian Portuguese respectively.
- (2) The original Portuguese named for the songs were, *morna-comentário* and *morna-estado d'alma*.
- (3) The present day *morna* is considered by most of the people of Cabo Verde to date from the era of Eugénio Tavares.
- (4) When the Portuguese settled Cabo Verde in the fifteenth century, they intended to develop the islands for plantations, but the project failed due to the harsh climate conditions.
- (5) Recently, there are music schools to learn *morna*. Certainly, "tradition" will change with time.
- (6) There are many musicians who can read music in Cabo Verde, but the author observed that in playing *morna*, people do not read the written musical notes but rather try to listen, to grasp the feel of the harmony.

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——— Accepted October 21, 2016

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